

REMARKS

The claims are revised in an effort to define over art newly cited in the last Office action. Claims 1-8 and 10-12 remain, with claims 3-7 previously withdrawn.

Examiner Nguyen is thanked for the telephone interview held on June 12, 2006 with the undersigned attorney for the Applicant. During that interview, proposed amendments to Claim 1 were discussed and agreement was reached that Claim 1, if amended as presented hereinabove, would define over *Nogaki* (JP8-17259). However, the Examiner also said that she might conduct a further search.

Claims 1, 2, 8, and 10-12 were rejected as anticipated by *Nogaki*. That rejection characterizes the insulation layers 4 of *Nogaki* as the insulating sealing material which consists substantially of the same material as the insulating material of the FFCs. The Applicant respectfully traverses that interpretation of *Nogaki*, especially as possibly applied to amended Claim 1.

In *Nogaki*, as best seen in Figure 1(b) of that reference, elements 4 represent the insulating material of the FFCs themselves, but not any insulation added to and surrounding the flat cables 1 and 2 that cross and connect with each other as shown in that reference.

To further distinguish the novelty of the present invention relative to *Nogaki*, Claim 1 is amended to require an added insulating sealing material which surrounds the exposed strip conductors and insulating material of the FFCs at the matrix. This added insulating sealing material consists substantially of the same material as the insulating material of the FFCs, so that the added sealing material surrounding the matrixes has

chemical, mechanical, and thermal characteristics substantially matching the same characteristics of the FFC insulating material.

Nogaki lacks any added insulating sealing material, namely, any insulating material other than the existing insulating layers 4 of the flat cables 1 and 2.

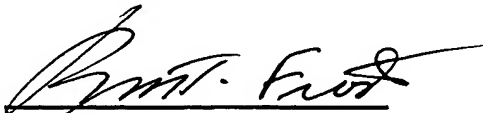
Accordingly, Claim 1 and the claims depending therefrom define novel structure over *Nogaki*.

Dependent Claims 2 and 10 are amended to make clear that the thickness of the added insulating sealing material is addressed in those claims. Dependent Claims 8 and 12 are revised to make clear that the FFCs lie in mutually-parallel planes in the area of the matrix. Those claims, and all other claims depending from Claim 1, define novel structure relative to *Nogaki* and thus are patentable over that reference.

The foregoing is submitted as a complete response to the Office action identified above. The Applicant respectfully submits that all claims remaining under consideration in this application are allowable and solicits a notice to that effect.

Respectfully submitted,

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